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EXAMINER

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**BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES**

Paper No. 29

Application Number: 09/286,160
Filing Date: April 05, 1999
Appellant(s): BRUNING ET AL.

MAILED

DEC 02 2003

Technology Center 2100

William Kubida
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed September 8, 2003.

(1) *Real Party in Interest*

A statement identifying the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) *Related Appeals and Interferences*

A statement identifying the related appeals and interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the decision in the pending appeal is contained in the brief.

(3) *Status of Claims*

The statement of the status of the claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) *Status of Amendments After Final*

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct.

(5) *Summary of Invention*

The summary of invention contained in the brief is correct.

(6) *Issues*

The appellant's statement of the issues in the brief is correct.

(7) *Grouping of Claims*

Appellant's brief includes a statement that claims 1-8 and 10-20 do not stand or fall together and provides reasons as set forth in 37 CFR 1.192(c)(7) and (c)(8).

(8) *Claims Appealed*

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

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(9) Prior Art of Record

5,991,844

Khosrowpour

11-1999

Massiglia, Paul, "The RAID book A Storage System Technology Handbook", 6th Edition, (February, 1997), pp 6, 8, 10, 102, 151-157

(10) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-2, 4-8, 11-16 and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Massiglia, The RAID Book in view of Khosrowpour (USPN: 5,991,844). Regarding claims 1, 4 and 6, Massiglia discloses a first plurality of disks (Page 151, Figure 73; Page 153, Figure 74); a second plurality of back-end controllers (RAID Engine) coupled to the first plurality of disks for organizing and presenting the first plurality of disks as a third plurality of redundant arrays of disks (Figure 73, page 151; Figure 74, page 153 - lower array management function(s)/ Mirroring Array Management Function(s)); a front-end controller (Stripe Engine) coupled to the second plurality of back-end controllers for striping the plurality of redundant arrays of disks and presenting the striped array as a virtual volume (Figure 73, page 151; Figure 74, page 153 - upper array management function/ Striping Array Management Function). Figures 73 and 74 represent the mirroring array management function(s) as multiple

separate entities. The mirroring array management function controls the operations of the disk(s) attached to it and thus functions as a controller (Page 8, Section Titled "Disk Arrays"; Page 10, Section Titled "The Role of the Array Management Function in Disk Arrays"). The striping array management function controls the operations of the disk attached to it and thus functions as a controller. Additionally, Massiglia describes the array management function(s) as a body of software or firmware which inherently executes in a hardware device. Massiglia does not explicitly disclose the front-end controller generating mirror sets from at least one of the disks in the third plurality of redundant arrays of disk received from the second plurality of back-end controllers. However, Khosrowpour teaches the concept of a controller (Figure 2, Reference 140), generating mirror RAID sets and striping RAID sets (C 5, L 31-35), which provides flexibility. In Massiglia's teachings mirroring is performed via a lower Array Management Function and striping is performed via an upper Array Management Function. In the event of a failure of the lower Array Management Function, the system would not be able to control the operation of the mirrored disks. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also generate mirror sets from the RAID sets using the front end controller in Massiglia's system for the desirable purpose of improved reliability and flexibility.

Regarding claim 2, Massiglia discloses mirrored disks. Mirrored disks inherently consist of a pair of disks, wherein one disk is the active disk and the other disk is a spare (replacement) disk used when the active disk fails. Therefore, the system taught by Massiglia and Khosrowpour disclose the plurality of disk including one or more spare disks.

Regarding claims 5 and 7, Massiglia discloses the features cited above in claims 4 and 6, however, Massiglia does not explicitly disclose the RAID engine as a RAID 5 engine and

organizing the plurality of disks as a plurality of RAID-5 sets. Massiglia does teach that a RAID 5 provides a simple mechanism for providing data protection using bit-by-bit parity (Page 102, 1st Paragraph). This feature provides reliability. One of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the benefits provided by a RAID 5 system and would have been motivated to organize the plurality of disks as a RAID 5 and use a RAID 5 engine with the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of increased reliability.

Regarding claim 8, Massiglia discloses an apparatus for providing a virtual volume, the apparatus comprising a plurality of back-end controllers (Figure 73 - Page 151, the lower Array Management Function(s)/ mirroring Array Management Function(s)) each configured to organize and present X N-member RAID sets (Figure 73 - wherein X is equal to one and N is equal to two), and each having N busses (Figure 73 - connections between the mirroring array management functions and the disks represented by the arrows) capable of supporting X + 1 disks (corresponding disks coupled to each mirroring array management function); a plurality of groups of X+1 disks (Figure 73, a group consists of the two disk (X + 1) coupled to a corresponding back-end controller), each group being coupled to one of the back-end-controller busses (Page 151, Figure 73- busses represented by the arrows between the disk(s) and the mirroring array management functions); and a local front-end controller coupled to the back-end controllers for receiving the RAID sets as members, striping the member RAID sets, and presenting the striped RAID sets as a virtual volume (Figure 73 - Page 151, upper Array Management Function/striping array management function). Figure 73 represents the mirroring array management function(s) as multiple separate entities as represents the striping array management function as a single entity. The mirroring array management function controls the operations of the disk(s) attached to it and thus functions as a controller (Page 8, Section Titled "Disk Arrays"; Page 10, Section Titled "The Role of the Array Management Function in Disk

Arrays"). The striping array management function controls the operations of the disk attached to it and thus functions as a controller. Additionally, Massiglia describes the array management function(s) as a body of software or firmware which inherently executes in a hardware device. Massiglia does not explicitly disclose the front-end controller generating mirror sets from at least one of the disks in the third plurality of redundant arrays of disk received from the second plurality of back-end controllers. However, Khosrowpour teaches the concept of a controller (Figure 2, Reference 140), generating mirror RAID sets and striping RAID sets (C 5, L 31-35) which provides flexibility. In Massiglia's teachings mirroring is performed via a lower Array Management Function and striping is performed via an upper Array Management Function. In the event of a failure of the lower Array Management Function, the system would not be able to control the operation of the mirrored disks. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also generate mirror sets from the RAID sets using the front end controller in Massiglia's system for the desirable purpose of improved reliability and flexibility.

Regarding claims 11-12, Massiglia discloses the limitations cited above in claim 8, however, Massiglia does not disclose a remote front-end controller coupled to at least some of the back-end controllers for receiving RAID sets as members, striping the member RAID sets and presenting the striped RAID sets as a virtual volume. However, Official Notice is taken that it is well known in the art to provide a redundant controller at a remote location to provide data recovery and to increase the reliability of the system in the event of an entire system failure due to disasters such as an earthquake, fire, explosion, hurricane, etc. Massiglia's local front-end controller performs the above features. Massiglia's system does not provide any measures for data recovery in the event of a failed array management function (controller). Hence, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a

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remote (redundant) front-end controller coupled to at least some of the plurality of back-end controllers for receiving RAID sets as members, striping the member RAID sets and presenting the striped RAID sets as a virtual volume to the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of data recovery and increased reliability.

Additionally, with respect to claim 12, as stated above in claim 8, it would have been desirable to provide a local front end controller, (which performs data mirroring and striping), which is configured to generate mirror sets from received RAID sets, to stripe the mirror sets and to present the striped mirror sets as the virtual volume to Massiglia's system and thus it would also be desirable and obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add a remote front-end controller which performs redundant functions of the local front-end controller to the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of data recovery and increased reliability.

Regarding claim 13, Massiglia discloses an electronic system comprising a computer (host computer (inherent); Page 6); and an apparatus coupled to the computer for presenting a virtual volume to the computer (hybrid RAID array - Figure 73, Figure 74); a first plurality of disks (Page 151, Figure 73; Page 153, Figure 74); a second plurality of back-end controllers (lower array management function(s)/ Mirroring Array Management Function(s)) coupled to the first plurality of disks for organizing and presenting the disks as a third plurality of redundant arrays of disks (Page 151, 153 - lower Array Management Function/ mirroring Array Management Function); a front-end controller (stripe engine) coupled to the second plurality of back-end controllers for striping the redundant arrays of disks and presenting the striped array as a virtual volume (Page 151, 153 - upper Array Management Function/striping array management function). Figures 73 and 74 represent the mirroring array management function(s) as multiple separate entities. The mirroring array management function controls the operations of the disk(s)

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attached to it and thus functions as a controller (Page 8, Section Titled "Disk Arrays"; Page 10, Section Titled "The Role of the Array Management Function in Disk Arrays"). The striping array management function controls the operations of the disk attached to it and thus functions as a controller. Additionally, Massiglia describes the array management function(s) as a body of software or firmware which inherently executes in a hardware device. Massiglia does not explicitly disclose the front-end controller generating mirror sets from at least one of the disks in the plurality of redundant arrays of disk. However, Khosrowpour teaches the concept of a controller (Figure 2, Reference 140), generating mirror RAID sets and striping RAID sets (C 5, L 31-35) which provides flexibility. In Massiglia's teachings mirroring is performed via a lower Array Management Function and striping is performed via an upper Array Management Function. In the event of a failure of the lower Array Management Function, the system would not be able to control the operation of the mirrored disks. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also generate mirror sets from the RAID sets using the front end controller in Massiglia's system for the desirable purpose of improved reliability and flexibility.

Regarding claims 14-15, Massiglia discloses using a second plurality of back-end controllers (lower array management function(s)/ Mirroring Array Management Function(s)), organizing first plurality of disks into a second plurality of redundant arrays of disks (Page 151, 153 - lower Array Management Function/ mirroring Array Management Function); using at least one a front-end controller (stripe engine), striping at least one of the second plurality of redundant arrays of disks together to form a virtual volume (Page 151, 153 - upper Array Management Function/striping array management function); and writing the data to the virtual volume (inherent). Figures 73 and 74 represent the mirroring array management function(s) as multiple separate entities. The mirroring array management function controls the operations of the disk(s)

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attached to it and thus functions as a controller (Page 8, Section Titled "Disk Arrays"; Page 10, Section Titled "The Role of the Array Management Function in Disk Arrays"). The striping array management function controls the operations of the disk attached to it and thus functions as a controller. Additionally, Massiglia describes the array management function(s) as a body of software or firmware which inherently executes in a hardware device. Massiglia does not explicitly disclose the front-end controller generating mirror sets from at least one of the disks in the plurality of redundant arrays of disk. However, Khosrowpour teaches the concept of a controller (Figure 2, Reference 140), generating mirror RAID sets and striping RAID sets (C 5, L 31-35) which provides flexibility. In Massiglia's teachings mirroring is performed via a lower Array Management Function and striping is performed via an upper Array Management Function. In the event of a failure of the lower Array Management Function, the system would not be able to control the operation of the mirrored disks. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also generate mirror sets from the RAID sets using the front end controller in Massiglia's system for the desirable purpose of improved reliability and flexibility.

Regarding claim 16, Massiglia discloses the features cited above in claims 4, 6 and 15, however, Massiglia does not explicitly disclose the RAID engine as a RAID 5 engine and organizing the plurality of disks as a plurality of RAID-5 sets. Massiglia does teach that a RAID 5 provides a simple mechanism for providing data protection using bit-by-bit parity (Page 102, 1st Paragraph). This feature provides reliability. One of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the benefits provided by a RAID 5 system and would have been motivated to organize the plurality of disks as a RAID 5 and use a RAID 5 engine with the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of increased reliability.

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Regarding claims 18-19, Massiglia discloses a method of storing data on a plurality of disk, the method comprises, using a plurality of back-end controllers, organizing the disks into a plurality of redundant arrays of disks (Figure 73, page 151; Figure 74, page 153 - lower array management function/Mirroring Array Management Functions; using at least one front-end controller, striping mirror sets from the redundant arrays of disks together to form a virtual volume (page 151, 153 - upper array management function - Striping Array Management Functional Unit - Figure 73, Figure 74) and writing data to the virtual volume. Figures 73 and 74 represent the mirroring array management function(s) as multiple separate entities. The mirroring array management function controls the operations of the disk(s) attached to it and thus functions as a controller (Page 8, Section Titled "Disk Arrays"; Page 10, Section Titled "The Role of the Array Management Function in Disk Arrays"). The striping array management function controls the operations of the disk attached to it and thus functions as a controller. Additionally, Massiglia describes the array management function(s) as a body of software or firmware which inherently executes in a hardware device. Massiglia does not disclose the at least one front-end controller forming mirror sets from the redundant arrays of disk. However, Khosrowpour teaches the concept of a controller (Figure 2, Reference 140), generating mirror RAID sets and striping RAID sets (C 5, L 31-35) which provides flexibility. In Massiglia's teachings mirroring is performed via a lower Array Management Function and striping is performed via an upper Array Management Function. In the event of a failure of the lower Array Management Function, the system would not be able to control the operation of the mirrored disks. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also generate mirror sets from the RAID sets using the front end controller in Massiglia's system for the desirable purpose of improved reliability and flexibility.

Regarding claim 20, Massiglia discloses the features cited above in claim 19, however, Massiglia does not explicitly disclose organizing the plurality of disks into a plurality of RAID-5 sets.

Massiglia does teach that a RAID 5 provides a simple mechanism for providing data protection using bit-by-bit parity (Page 102, 1st Paragraph). This feature provides reliability. Hence, one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the benefits provided by a RAID 5 system and would have been motivated to use a RAID 5 system with the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of increased reliability.

4. Claims 3 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Massiglia, The RAID Book and Khosrowpour (USPN: 5,991,844) as applied to claims 1 and 14 above and further in view of Griffith (USPN: 6,330,687).

Regarding claim 3, Massiglia and Khosrowpour disclose the limitations cited above in claim 1, additionally, Massiglia and Khosrowpour disclose each back-end controller including a plurality of busses (Massiglia - connections represented by the arrows in Figure 73; connections coupled to member disk 2, member 3 and mirroring array management function and connections coupled to member disk 0, member disk 1). However, Massiglia and Khosrowpour do not disclose each back-end controller bus coupled to one and only one of the disks associated with each of the redundant array of disks. However, Griffith teaches the concept of each controller being coupled to one and only one of the disks associated with each of the redundant array of disks (Figure 3, References, 1-6). Figure 3 shows that each channel reference (s) 1-6 are each connected to one of the disk from each redundant array. Channel 1 is coupled to References 40, 141, Channel 2 is coupled to References 42, 143, etc. Griffith teaches that this configuration allows one of the controllers access to the disk coupled to the other controller in the event of a failure of the other controller thereby extending the protection of the operation of the RAID system (C 43-65; Abstract). In the system taught by Massiglia and Khosrowpour the busses are coupled to one of

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the disk in one of the redundant arrays and not to one of the disk in each of the redundant arrays, thereby yielding the system to decreased reliability. One of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the shortcomings of the system taught by Massiglia and Khosrowpour and would have been motivated to use the teachings of Griffith with the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of increased reliability.

Regarding claim 17, Massiglia and Khosrowpour disclose the limitations cited above in claim 14, additionally, Massiglia and Khosrowpour disclose one or more back-end controllers (Massiglia - Figure 74, mirroring array management functions), each having a plurality of busses, wherein each bus is coupled to one of the disk of one of the redundant arrays and to a spare disk (bus coupled to Member disk 2, member disk 3- spare disk and to mirroring array management function and the bus coupled to member disk 0, member disk 1- spare disk and to the mirroring array management function). Massiglia and Khosrowpour do not disclose each back-end controller bus coupled to one and only one of the disks associated with each of the redundant array of disks. However, Griffith teaches the concept of each controller being coupled to one and only one of the disks associated with each of the redundant array of disks (Figure 3, References, 1-6). Figure 3 shows that each channel reference (s) 1-6 are each connected to one of the disk from each redundant array. Channel 1 is coupled to References 40, 141, Channel 2 is coupled to References 42, 143, etc. Griffith teaches that this configuration allows one of the controllers access to the disk coupled to the other controller in the event of a failure of the other controller thereby extending the protection of the operation of the RAID system (C 43-65; Abstract). In the system taught by Massiglia and Khosrowpour the busses are coupled to one of the disk in one of the redundant arrays and not to one of the disk in each of the redundant arrays, thereby yielding the system to decreased reliability. One of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the shortcomings of the system taught by Massiglia and Khosrowpour and would

have been motivated to use the teachings of Griffith with the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of increased reliability.

5. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Massiglia, The RAID Book and Khosrowpour (USPN: 5,991,844) in view of Bergsten (USPN: 6,282,610) and Pinson (USPN: 6,256,748).

Regarding claim 10, Massiglia and Khosrowpour disclose the limitations cited above in claim 8, however, Massiglia and Khosrowpour do not explicitly disclose the plurality of back-end controllers including primary local, redundant local, cloning, primary remote, and redundant remote back-end controllers. Massiglia discloses primary local back-end controllers. However, Bergsten teaches the concept of providing multiple remote backup storage controllers for the purpose of increased reliability (C 1, L 26-40; C 3, L 41-62; C 4, L 21-28, L 60-62; C 5, L 44-54; Figure 1). Pinson teaches the concept of providing redundant (backup) local controllers for increased reliability (Figure 3a, 4, C 2, L 55-67; C 4, L 10-56). Additionally, Official Notice is taken that the concept of off-line data backups (cloning) is well known in the art as an efficient means to provide a redundant copy of data used in the primary system/storage to provide access to the data in the event of a failure in the primary system/storage. The teachings provided by Bergsten, Pinson and that which is known in the art all provide increased reliability through redundancy and for this reason it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use these teachings with the teachings of Massiglia and Khosrowpour for the desirable purpose of increased reliability.

(11) Response to Argument

Regarding Applicant's arguments that the claimed combination of back-end controllers and a front-end controller and their required functionalities are not shown or suggested by Massiglia or

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Khosrowpour taken separately or in combination, and that it is not clear what additional teaching is provided by Khosrowpour, the Examiner disagrees. The claim, for example claim 1, calls for a second plurality of back-end controllers coupled to the first plurality of disks for organizing and presenting the first plurality of disks as a third plurality of redundant arrays of disk. This feature is taught by Massiglia, refer to Figure 73, page 151; Figure 74, page 153 - lower array management function(s)/ Mirroring Array Management Function(s)). The lower array management function organizes and presents the first plurality of disks as redundant arrays of disks (mirrored). Additionally, claim 1, requires a front-end controller coupled to the second plurality of back-end controllers for generating mirror sets from at least one of the disks in a third plurality of redundant arrays of disks received from the second plurality of back-end controllers, striping at least one of the disks in the third plurality of redundant arrays of disks and presenting the striped arrays as a virtual volume. Essentially, the claimed front-end controller performs mirroring and striping. The above rejection indicates that Massiglia teaches a front-end controller which performs striping but does not also provide mirroring. Khosrowpour is relied upon for teaching a controller which performs mirroring and striping. The above rejection indicates that the combination of Massiglia and Khosrowpour teaches the required elements for the front-end controller by modifying Massiglia's front-end controller, with the teachings of Khosrowpour, to also include the functionality of mirroring, based on the controller taught by Khosrowpour which performs mirroring and striping. Hence, Massiglia's modified front-end controller performs mirroring and striping and thus teaches the limitations claimed for the front-end controller.

Regarding Applicant's argument that the Office Action does not argue that the combination teaches each and every element of claim 1 and that the combination of the references is admitted in the Office Action to fail to result in the claimed apparatus of claim 1, the Examiner disagrees.

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It is understood that the combination of the prior art relied upon in a rejection made under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) teaches each and every claimed element by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention. In this case, the combination of Massiglia and Khosrowpour teach a first plurality of disks (taught by Massiglia); a plurality of back-end controllers coupled to the first plurality of disks for organizing and presenting the first plurality of disks as a third plurality of redundant arrays of disk (this feature is taught by Massiglia), and a front-end controller coupled to the second plurality of back-end controllers for generating mirror sets from at least one of the disks in a third plurality of redundant arrays of disks received from the second plurality of back-end controllers, striping at least one of the disks in the third plurality of redundant arrays of disks and presenting the striped arrays as a virtual volume (taught by modifying Massiglia with the teachings of Khosrowpour). Thus the above rejection teaches each and every claimed element by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention.

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, it is common knowledge that electronic devices are prone to failures, which is what mirroring and RAID technology seek to improve by providing the data in another location in the event of a failure. Hence, in the event of a failure of the lower Array Management Function in Massiglia's system, the system would not be able to control the operation of the mirrored disks.

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For this reason, one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the benefits of the teachings in the secondary reference and would have been motivated to use these teachings with the teachings of Massiglia to provide flexibility in the system and increased reliability. The secondary reference recognizes improved reliability by providing redundancy (C 1, L 38-67; C 2, L 1-37). Accordingly, the motivation to provide redundancy for improved reliability is suggested by Khosrowpour and thus it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to also generate mirror sets from the RAID sets using the front end controller [to provide redundant mirroring functionality in the front-end controller] in Massiglia's system for the desirable purpose of improved reliability and flexibility. The fact that Massiglia does not make this modification does not represent everyone of ordinary skill in the art and thus is it improper to assume such, considering what was well known in the art at the time of the invention. Systems are developed based on the needs of the users. In this instance, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to implement such a modification for increased reliability and flexibility.

Regarding Applicant's argument that the combination of Massiglia and Khosrowpour produces a seemingly inoperative device, the Applicant has interpreted the combination of the references as bodily incorporating the structure/design of one reference into the structure/design of the other reference. However, the test for obviousness is not whether the features of a secondary reference may be bodily incorporated into the structure of the primary reference; nor is it that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981).

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Regarding Applicant's explanation of what the combination of Massiglia and Khosrowpour would lead to, the Examiner disagrees. Applicant's arguments that Khosrowpour's controller are essentially and necessarily identical in function and performance and that if the Khosrowpour controllers 140 and 200 were combined consistent with Massiglia, this combination would fail to provide the redundant, failover function taught by Khosrowpour is irrelevant to the issue at hand because Khosrowpour is relied upon for teaching a controller which provides both functionality of mirroring and striping. Thus the basis of this argument is unclear. The above rejection states modifying Massiglia's front-end controller to also include the functionality of mirroring based on the specific teachings of Khosrowpour which teaches a single controller providing mirroring and striping.

Regarding Applicant's argument that Massiglia teaches away from the combining striping and mirroring in a single controller, the Examiner disagrees. The fact that a reference is silent to teaching a feature does not mean that the Reference teaches away from the feature.

Regarding Applicant's argument that Massiglia does not disclose that the front-end controller presents the striped arrays as a virtual volume, Massiglia discloses, on page 151, lines 9-10, that the upper Array Management Function layer stripes data across the virtual disks and presents a single virtual disk (volume) to applications.

Regarding Applicant's argument that Massiglia does not teach spare disks, the Examiner disagrees. In a mirrored system, only one of the disks is active, in that requests are submitted to

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prior art indicated by the Examiner with respect to the corresponding part of the claim limitations are not so or cannot be interpreted to be such. The Applicant merely asserts that the Examiner reads too much into the simplified arrows of these figures and infers, somehow, that these simplified arrows teach the specific recitations of claim 8.

Regarding Applicant's argument that Massiglia does not show, (with respect to claim 8), multiple controllers that are interconnected so that the virtual disks presented by one controller become members of a RAID set managed by another controller, the Examiner disagrees. Massiglia teaches in Figure 73 represents the mirroring array management function(s) as multiple separate entities [multiple controllers] and represents the striping array management function as a single entity. The mirroring array management function controls the operations of the disk(s) attached to it and thus functions as a controller (Page 8, Section Titled "Disk Arrays"; Page 10, Section Titled "The Role of the Array Management Function in Disk Arrays"). The striping array management function controls the operations of the disk attached to it and thus functions as a controller. Additionally, the virtual disks presented by the multiple controllers become members of a striped RAID set managed by the front-end controller [stripe engine].

Regarding Applicant's arguments with respect to the use of Official Notice to finding the limitations of claims 11 and 13, Applicant's traversal of each and every instance on which the Examiner has taken Official Notice is unseasonably challenged, since these Official Notice instances were made of record as far back as Paper Number 11, mailed on January 10, 2002.

The MPEP 2144.03 states:

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the active disk, and upon a failure or no response of the active disk, the mirror disk becomes active and takes over, which is also consistent with the explanation provided by the Applicant that a spare as called for in claim 2 is a disk that is available to be substituted in place of a failed one of the mirrors.

Regarding Applicant's argument that claim 4 calls for a RAID engine which has not been shown in Massiglia, it is essential/inherent that a RAID engine is present in Massiglia because the disk are arranged according to a RAID structure. The RAID engine is indicated as part of the lower array management function. The lower array management function organizes and presents the first plurality of disks as redundant arrays of disks (mirrored).

Applicant's arguments regarding claim 5 fail to comply with 37 CFR 1.111(b) because they amount to a general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without specifically pointing out why it is not obvious in light of Massiglia to implement a RAID 5 in Massiglia's teachings.

Regarding Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 6, refer to the above statements regarding claim 1.

Regarding Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 8, the Examiner disagrees. The Examiner has explicitly mapped the claimed limitations of claim 8 to the prior art based on a reasoning interpretation of the Figures. The Applicant must establish that the teachings of the

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If applicant does not seasonably traverse the well known statement during examination, then the object of the well known statement is taken to be admitted prior art. In re Chevenard, 139 F.2d 71, 60 USPQ 239 (CCPA 1943). A seasonable challenge constitutes a demand for evidence made as soon as practicable during prosecution. Thus, applicant is charged with rebutting the well known statement in the next reply after the Office action in which the well known statement was made. This is necessary because the examiner must be given the opportunity to provide evidence in the next Office action or explain why no evidence is required. If the examiner adds a reference to the rejection in the next action after applicant's rebuttal, the newly cited reference, if it is added merely as evidence of the prior well known statement, does not result in a new issue and thus the action can potentially be made final. If no amendments are made to the claims, the examiner must not rely on any other teachings in the reference if the rejection is made final.

Additionally, the MPEP 2144 states:

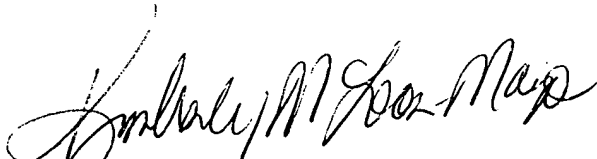
To adequately traverse such a finding, an applicant must specifically point out the supposed errors in the examiner's action, which would include stating why the noticed fact is not considered to be common knowledge or well known in the art. See 37 CFR 1.111(b). See also Chevenard, 139 F.2d at 713, 60 USPQ at 241 ("[I]n the absence of any demand by appellant for the examiner to produce authority for his statement, we will not consider this contention.").

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The Applicant has not complied with the above requirements provided in MPEP 2144 and 2144.03.

Regarding Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 3, 10 and 17, refer to the above statements regarding claim 1 [regarding the combination of Massiglia and Khosrowpour].

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.


KIMBERLY MCLEAN-MAYO
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly N. McLean-Mayo
Examiner
Art Unit 2187

KNM
December 1, 2003

Conferees:

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